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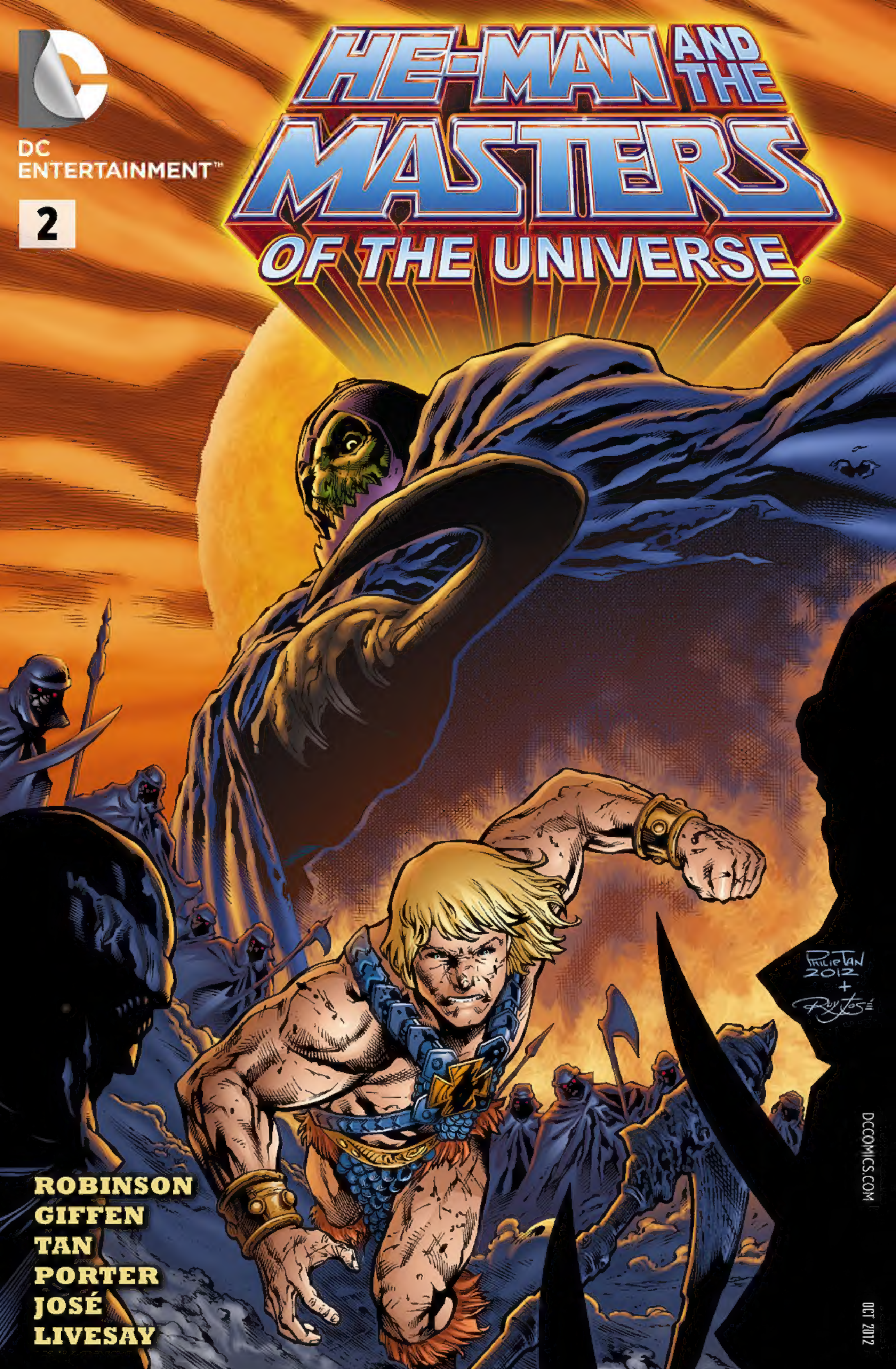
HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®



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CASTLE GRAYSKULL

...FOUGHT LIKE ONE BORN TO COMBAT!

A WOODSMAN'S AXE! HE WAS ARMED WITH A SIMPLE WOODSMAN'S AXE YET HE WIELDED IT AS IF IT WERE A BATTLE AXE!

DESERT STORM

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THERE IS TOO MUCH OF WHO HE WAS YET WITHIN HIM!

INSTINCT!

HIS MIND DOES NOT REMEMBER BUT HIS BODY DOES!

SIGH A LITANY OF EXCUSES.

MASTER, IT WAS NOT MY--

ENOUGH.

IT WAS A SIMPLE ENOUGH TASK I LAID BEFORE YOU, WAS IT NOT?

SHOULD MY WRETCHED NEPHEW VIOLATE THE BOUNDARIES I SET FOR HIM... KILL HIM.

HNGH... M-MASTER?

YEEAAGHH!

KR-RAUNCH

NOT SO DIFFICULT A TASK AT ALL, IF YOU COME RIGHT DOWN TO IT.

YAAHAAGHH!

KRUNKTCH

AND YET, SOMEHOW, THIS SIMPLE TASK PROVED TOO MUCH FOR YOU.

MASTER... P-PLEASE...

THUP

THWUD

BEASTMAN THANKS YOU, MASTER. MERCIFUL IS SKELETOR. YOUR SERVANT THANKS YOU...

INTOLERABLE.

THD

-GASP!-

I HAVE THE POWER NOW. NOW AND *FOREVER!*

THEY WOULD DO WELL TO KEEP THAT IN MIND, FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE...

THE SIMPLEST TASKS! HOW IS IT I FIND MYSELF SURROUNDED BY CRETINS INCAPABLE OF PERFORMING EVEN THE *SIMPLEST* OF *TASKS?!*

HIS MEMORY IS GONE! *ALL* OF THEIR MEMORIES ARE GONE! THEY ARE HELPLESS, *MINE* TO MANIPULATE AS I SEE FIT!

WHY DOES ALL OF THIS FEEL FAMILIAR, AS IF I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE?

EVERY STEP I'VE TAKEN SINCE LEAVING HOME FEELS TWICE TRODDEN.

HOW CAN PLACES I'VE NEVER BEEN TRIGGER MEMORIES I SHOULDN'T HAVE?

HUH...MORE TO THE POINT, HOW COULD I HAVE **EVER** FORGOTTEN SUCH RAW SPLENDOR?

IS THIS WHY YOU LEAD ME ON? IS THIS WHY I FOLLOW DESPITE NOT FULLY UNDERSTANDING? TO REMEMBER?

REMEMBER ***WHAT***, ZOAR? PLACES I MIGHT HAVE BEEN? PEOPLE I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN?

SIGH IF ONLY YOU COULD TALK.

AH, YOU SEE IT TOO? WE'LL SOON HAVE COMPANY IF THEY STAY THEIR COURSE.

CHT

GREETINGS, DESERT RIDERS. I AM A STRANGER TO THESE LANDS AND FIND MYSELF SHORT OF WATER.

COULD YOU POINT ME IN THE DIRECTION OF AN OASIS OR SPRING SOURCE?

IT IS HIM.

VERY GOOD. SEE TO HIM.

THPT

!?!

CHT

THUP

REMEMBER, ALIVE AND UNHARMED!

DO WE LOOK FOOLS TO YOU?

QUICK! QUICK! WE MUST SEE TO HIM BEFORE HE COMES TO!

ARID SPRING OASIS

MAKE WAY! HIS LORDSHIP COMMANDS THE PRISONER'S PRESENCE! MAKE WAY!

ON YOUR KNEES BEFORE THE PRESENCE!

NNGH!

THWUD

MY, MY, MY...HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN.

DO NOT WASTE YOUR ENERGY STRUGGLING. THOSE RESTRAINTS WERE BUILT *SPECIFICALLY* TO HOLD YOU.

SPECIFICALLY? *ME?*

YOUR UNCLE SENDS HIS REGARDS. THAT *AND* A WRIT OF EXECUTION.

DOES THIS "UNCLE" HAVE A NAME?

IT WOULD HAVE LITTLE MEANING TO YOU.

HOW ABOUT LETTING ME BE THE JUDGE OF THAT?

SKELETOR.

AH...HEARING HIS NAME DISTURBS YOU, DOES IT? WELL IT *SHOULD.*

HE IS, AFTER ALL, THE ARCHITECT OF YOUR DOWN-FALL.

I DON'T KNOW THAT NAME!

OF COURSE YOU DO NOT. IT IS HIS *WILL* THAT YOU DO NOT.

IT IS ALSO HIS WILL THAT YOU SHOULD DIE NEVER KNOWING.

TCHA...WHERE *ARE* MY MANNERS? I AM KRONIS, ALSO CALLED TRAPJAW...THANKS TO YOU. I WOULD WELCOME YOU TO MY HUMBLE CARAVAN, BUT I AM AFRAID YOU WILL NOT SURVIVE LONG ENOUGH TO ENJOY ITS AMENITIES.

PEN HIM.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!

BECAUSE NOT DOING SO WOULD BE TO INCUR THE WRATH OF SKELETOR.

SLEEP WELL, ADAM. TOMORROW YOU PETITION FOR YOUR LIFE.

GRUH... SNF...YOU HAVE BUSINESS WITH THE PRISONER, WENCH?

KRONIS ORDERED HIM GIVEN WATER. HE WANTS THE PRISONER WELL FIT TO PETITION.

GO ON THEN. PERHAPS THIS ONE WILL BE GOOD FOR A BIT OF SPORT.

KRONIS DIDN'T COME ACROSS AS SOMEONE OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT FAIR PLAY.

HE'S NOT.

AH. THEN THERE WAS NO ORDER?

KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN OR WE'RE *BOTH* DEAD.

WHY DO I FEEL I SHOULD KNOW YOUR NAME?

THE VERY QUESTION I CAME TO ASK *YOU*. I WAS THERE WHEN YOU WERE BROUGHT BEFORE TRAP--

AH, AMID MY MANY ADMIRERS?

JOKE IF YOU MUST--

SITUATION SUCH AS THIS, SEEMS TO ME I CAN LAUGH OR I CAN SCREAM. I'M NOT BIG ON SCREAMING.

SO YOU SAY. HERE. TAKE SOME WATER BEFORE THE GUARD GETS SUSPICIOUS.

YOU DO HAVE A NAME?

DESERT WIND.

THAT'S A SLAVE NAME. TRY AGAIN.

TEELA.

MY NAME IS TEELA.

RIGHT THEN! THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT! A CYBORG-CAMEL COULDN'T DRINK THAT MUCH WATER!

BACK TO YOUR DOINGS, WENCH!

TEELA...

OF ALL THE TIMES FOR THAT ONE TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF DUTY, COULDN'T HAVE JUST FALLEN ASLEEP LIKE EVERY OTHER FOUL-UP I'VE ENCOUNTERED...

OKAY, ADAM, JUST EXACTLY WHEN HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED A FOUL-UP OF ANY KIND?

GUESS I CAN ADD THAT TO THE GROWING LIST OF QUESTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN DOGGING ME EVER SINCE I SET OUT.

MAYBE TOMORROW WILL OFFER A FEW ANSWERS.

YOU ARE READY?

I HAVE A CHOICE?

EXCELLENT. YOU KNOW HOW THIS WORKS?

HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE.

IT IS SIMPLICITY ITSELF. YOU CHOOSE THE PERSON YOU WILL PETITION FOR YOUR FREEDOM. SHOULD THAT PERSON DENY YOU, YOU FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

SHOULD YOU SURVIVE, YOU PETITION AGAIN...AND AGAIN UNTIL YOUR PETITION IS GRANTED OR YOU OR THOSE YOU MIGHT PETITION ARE DEAD.

AND IF I DON'T FEEL LIKE KILLING ALL OF YOU?

THEN... PETITION DENIED.

CHOOSE OR DIE.

HUK!

UK.

HIM.

PLEASE LET THIS WORK, PLEASE LET THIS WORK. .

GOT IT!

WHUP

THE SWORD?! WHY DID I TAKE THE SWORD?! WHAT WAS I THINKING?!

I'M A WOODSMAN, NOT A WARRIOR!

OKAY...BROKE CLEAR. NOW WHAT?!

RUN AWAY? DON'T MIND IF I DO.

WHICH BEGS THE QUESTION, RUN AWAY TO WHERE?

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT THIS THROUGH BETTER BEFORE TORQUING OFF THE WHOLE CAMP.

YUP. DEFINITELY SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT THROUGH BETTER.

UM... EN GARDE?

HEY, I'M NOT THAT BAD AT THIS, CONSIDERING I'VE NEVER HELD A SWORD BEFORE IN MY LIFE!

THAT I REMEMBER.

"THAT I REMEMBER"?! WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?!

SAME PLACE AS THESE SWORD SKILLS?

MAYBE I SHOULD STOP LOOKING A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH AND JUST GO WITH IT.

I MAY NOT REMEMBER ANY SWORD SKILLS BUT MY BODY SURE DOES.

NOT TOO DISTURBING!

!?!

AN EARTHQUAKE? ON TOP OF EVERY-THING ELSE AN EARTHQUAKE?!

KRUNCH-KRK

BACK OFF, ALL OF YOU! HE IS *MINE*!

KRAK KKKK

AND, JUST LIKE THAT, AN EARTHQUAKE DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT BAD.

SKELETOR SOLD YOU SHORT! HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER!

A SPIRIT SUCH AS YOURS CAN NEVER BE BROKEN!

CLA-TANG

THANKS. I THINK.

LET IT BE KRONIS' FIGHT, THEN! LET IT BE ABOUT REVENGE!

REVENGE?!

DO I GET TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS I DID!?

NO, NO, NO! DON'T START FIGHTING LIKE A WOODSMAN NOW!

WOULD YOU DENY WHAT YOUR EYES SEE?! BEHOLD TRAPJAW! BEHOLD YOUR HANDIWORK!

JAW?! I DID THAT!?

KLANGKT

RMMB-RM-MMBRRR-MBLU

BUT I'VE NEVER EVEN *SEEN* YOU BEFORE!

DIE WITH THE LIE, MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE! DIE WITH THE LIE!

EH...?

NO. NOT NOW...NOT WHEN I'M SO CLOSE...

RMMBL-RM-MMBLMMBRRR-MBLL

NOT NOOMMMMMMM

GO LIMP!

TEELA? WH--? YOU... *YOU* DID THIS?!

LOOKS THAT WAY. NOW DO ME A FAVOR AND DUMMY UP UNTIL I GET US CLEAR.

RMMBLRM-BLMM-BRRRMBLL

YOU AND ME, SOMETHING TELLS ME WE'VE GOT A *LOT* TO TALK ABOUT.

RMMRM-MMBLRRR-MBLL

TELL ME AGAIN WHY YOU DIDN'T JUST SLIT HIS THROAT?

...COULDN'T VERY WELL LET THEM KILL YOU.
ACTUALLY, YES, YOU COULD.
FINE. THEN I *OPTED* NOT TO LET THEM KILL YOU.
BY STAMPEDING THEIR BURDEN BEASTS.
WHAT? WHAT'S WITH THE TONE OF VOICE?
I MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN TRAMPLED TOO.
REALLY? I SAVE YOUR LIFE AND YOU HAND ME GRIEF?
HONESTLY, ADAM, YOU ARE THE MOST SELF-CENTER--
WHAT DID YOU JUST CALL ME?
ADAM. THAT IS YOUR NAME, ISN'T IT?
AND YOU KNEW THIS-- HOW?
I...DON'T KNOW. I MEAN, I JUST KNEW... IT WAS...
WELCOME TO MY HELL.
WERE YOU TO ASK ME I WOULD SWEAR THAT, BEFORE TODAY, I HAD NEVER HELD A SWORD. AND THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNI--
OH!
RELAX. IT'S ONLY ZOAR.
AND WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I NEEDED YOU?
ADAM? REMEMBER I SAID WE'VE GOT A LOT TO TALK ABOUT?
WOULD YOU MIND MUCH IF WE STARTED WITH THE FACT THAT THAT'S *NOT* A BIRD?
NEXT: BLOOD TIDE!